



H.RES. 981 – Recognizing March 6, 2008, as the first-ever World Glaucoma Day, established to increase awareness of glaucoma, which is the second leading cause of preventable blindness in the United States and worldwide

FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 981 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) on February 13, 2008. The resolution was referred to the House Committee on the Energy and Commerce, but was never considered.

H.Res. 981 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on April 22, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.Res. 981 resolves that the House of Representatives:

- Recognizes the first-ever World Glaucoma Day;
- Supports the efforts of the National Eye Institute within the National Institutes of Health to fund research on the causes of glaucoma, including genetic and environmental risk factors, glaucoma prevention, the relationships between damage to the optic nerve and loss of vision, societal and individual impacts, diagnostics, and treatment to save and potentially restore sight; and
- Congratulates the American Glaucoma Society for its efforts to expand awareness of the prevalence and economic burden of glaucoma, as well as the continued need for federally funded research into the disease, through congressional visits recently conducted.

BACKGROUND

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can damage the eye's optic nerve and result in vision loss and blindness. Glaucoma occurs when the normal fluid pressure inside the eyes slowly rises.

According to the National Eye Institute at the National Institute of Health, approximately three million Americans have open-angle glaucoma--but about half are unaware of it. Glaucoma accounts for over 4.5 million visits to physicians each year. It is estimated that as many as 120,000 Americans are now blind from the disease.

The purpose of the first ever World Glaucoma day is to bring awareness to the dangers of undiagnosed glaucoma and to encourage people to get regular eye check-ups in order to avoid vision loss.

STAFF CONTACT

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